

Shirley Nile Ainge

April 7, 2009

Interviewed by Elaine Carr

Shirley: I was born in 1917, July 13. Shirley Price was born June 22, 1917, and his name's Shirley. Shirley Slaugh was born July 6, 1917, and his name is Shirley. The three Shirleys were born within three weeks. Now that's a coincidence isn't it? Shirley Price and I are still alive. We went to High School together.

Elaine: What's your full name and when were you born?

Shirley: My name is Shirley, just like Shirley Temple, Shirley Nile Ainge. I was born on July 13, 1917 on Friday the 13th.

Elaine: Who were your parents?

Shirley: My mother's name was Ella Sybil Fletcher. Dad's name was Jonah Nile Ainge. He never did use the Jonah. He didn't like it, just Nile Ainge.

Elaine: Did your parents grow up in the Uinta Basin?

Shirley: My father grew up in the Jensen area. Mother grew up about fifteen miles up White River from Rangely.

Elaine: So they both grew up pretty close to this local area?

Shirley: Yes, they were pretty well both from the local area. The old house is still standing that I was born in, in Jensen.

Elaine: Who are your brother and sisters?

Shirley: I'm the oldest. Then there was George Oscar, Nila Rose Robinson. Then Leafy, she married a Gardner, and then Grant Ainge was a brother. He lives in Jensen. He has resided there most of his life. There was a little girl. She lived to be five and a half months old, Ella May, they called her home. Then there was Joann Gross, then Joy Haslem.
Do you know any of them?

Elaine: I know Joy. She lives out in my area.

Shirley: A lot of people say my hell she's not your sister. Well I guess she is because we have the same parents.

Elaine: So you grew up in Jensen?

Shirley: Not entirely. In 1927 dad moved us to Manila. We were over there until 1932. We spent five years at Manila in childhood.

Elaine: So, you were ten when you moved to Manila. Do you remember before that when you lived in Jensen?

Shirley: I started school in Jensen.

Elaine: Do you remember any of your school teachers?

Shirley: No, I don't. I went to the third grade. Maybe I shouldn't tell this. My brother George, see he was two years younger than me. He was four when I was six. They tried to start me to school. We lived quite away from the school up on the Sunshine Ranch. But anyway, I'd go out and hide until it was too late to go to school, and go back [home]. They wanted to know the reason. I said, "I'm not going to school, because George don't have to."

And I didn't start until he was six and I was eight to go to school for that reason. The next year they tried the same thing and I done the same damn thing. They'd boot my pants and start me to school the next day. I'd go out there and play around for awhile and then I'd go back home.

We had a dog; he was kind of a collie. He wasn't big but he was partly collie. An old dog, we called him Old Shep and we got him as a pup and raised him. Uncle Joe, a brother of dad's built a harness and built a little halter. He didn't build anything to put in his mouth or anything. He built a little halter to put on him and some lines and a regular little harness and fixed some shaves to our sleigh and we broke that dog to pull us. We could guide him. He would go like heck pulling us kids.

Elaine: Do you remember going down to the Green River and spending time?

Shirley: Oh, we did a lot of fishing in the Green River. I and my brother next to me, but especially me, until we went to Manila, I lived with my

grandparents. My grandmother most of the time, my grandfather was dead. They lived up on Brush Creek.

Elaine: What were their names?

Shirley: I don't know if my Grandfather had a middle name or not. His name was George.

Elaine: So you stayed a lot with them in Jensen?

Shirley: My grandmother was a McKee. There's not a McKee in the Uinta Basin that doesn't connect to her.

Elaine: There are a lot of McKee's.

Shirley: The ones that originally were here in the Uinta Basin connect to my grandmother.

Dads brother Joe was an old bach' and Uncle Chuck. They lived with grandmother. They didn't have any kids so they more or less took us over, George and I, and grandmother did. They would take us fishing. Back then there was a lot of fishing on the Green River. There was a lot of what they called those little mud cats. There wasn't any of the other catfish in the river. There were just little cats' and we'd catch a lot of them and a lot of fish.

My grandmother lived where you cross the bridge going to the Dinosaur, Brush Creek, about a half mile straight west of there. She owned that ranch from there up to where Skoot Wilkins owns a ranch. It was called the Buckle Ranch.

Elaine: What do you remember about the ranch? Did she have cattle?

Shirley: No, they didn't have too many cattle after I was big enough to remember.

Elaine: Did they have sheep?

Shirley: It's a story all to itself. Let's talk about Manila.

Elaine: So, you moved to Manila when you were ten?

Shirley: We went to Manila. I think that Ella May was born on the fifteenth; my mother's birthday was the eighteenth. Dad left the next day after mom's birthday with a bunch of cattle and I went with him. I remember my uncle Joe; we must have stayed up there that night. Real early in the morning, now we had a pack horse to pack on, and I wasn't quite ten years old yet, and I remember dad and I getting in the corral getting them cows out of the corral and starting them. We started them up over the hill right from Brush Creek there. I rode out of the corral. My Uncle Joe was standing there with a lead rope for that pack horse. He handed that lead rope up to me. I can't tell you a dam thing that happened from there until we got over to the corral. You know the Diamond Mountain Road that goes to Matt Warner where the big corral is. There was a little old sheep corral there that they called the counting corral.

When they put the sheep on the forest there was somebody there counting the sheep to make sure people weren't getting too many sheep on the forest? About a mile or so east of there, and I don't know how many days this was, but it came up the dangest blizzard, just a real bad one. We made it to that counting corral. Dad put the cows in the corral and I tied the horses up.

There's a great big old outdoor toilet or privy or whatever you want to call it, a big one. You talk about snow and blow. Dad built a fire in front of that. That night I slept in that privy. He built me a bed out of horse blankets. It's not everybody who's slept in a privy, but I did that night.

But I can tell you just damn near every step those cows made from there to Manila but I can't from Brush Creek to there. I just can't tell you. But, after that blizzard started, but hell, you know a kid less than ten years old, man I must have been a good cowboy. I bet I thought I was ten feet tall.

We went past the Red Canyon Lodge (area) up there. We went right past it and that Greens Lake, there was two lakes, and down into the river. There's a trail where that lookout is down from the lodge down along the canyon rim. You walk right out there and down that canyon there's a trail. Dad took that bunch of cows down that trail into the river and then up the river. There was a fence across the trail so the cows couldn't get back up, or the horses.

I woke up the next morning. It was just coming daylight. Dad wasn't in bed. Boy, I'll tell you I come up out there a hollering and he was sitting there by the fire cooking breakfast.

Elaine: Did you enjoy herding livestock from one place to the other?

Shirley: Well, going down that canyon. This is something I still can't figure and I've handled a lot of cattle. Dad just bunched those cattle up to the head of that trail and usually you know you had to push them and raise heck to get them to going. We sat there a little while and those cattle just headed right straight down that trail to the river. About half way down there was a little cliff dweller house to the side up on a ledge from the trail. A store house dad thought it was. We stopped and looked at that. The next morning we was having trouble getting the cows across the bridge of one of the creeks. Dad had me holding the back end of them and after we got them all straightened going up the river again, the water was high that time of year. He told me, he said, "I seen a lion back down there."

I said, "The heck you did." He said, "Yeah!" I said, "Well, why didn't you tell me so I could have seen it?" He said, "Shirley, if I'd told you, I'd lost my cowboy and my help."

Which, he would have. I wouldn't let him out of my sight if I'd known that lion was there.

Elaine: I've heard of a lot of lions in that area.

Shirley: I didn't get to see it but dad seen it run across the trail.

Elaine: So then you went on the Manila. And did you say you lived there four or five years?

Shirley: Five years. I was fifteen when I came back.

Elaine: Did you go to school up there?

Shirley: Yeah, we went to school there. Now they had two schools over at Manila. The first two years that we were over there we went to the school up in Manila. Those two years I made two grades each year that we were in Manila. I did the third and fourth and fifth and sixth. I did the third and fourth one year and then I did the fifth and sixth the next year.

Then there was what they called the Wyoming School. We moved down pretty close to it. We lived in Utah about better than a mile (from the Wyoming border). We went to that school for three years. It was just barely over the border, just right on the border. I went to the Linwood or Wyoming School up to the eighth grade. That was as high as it went.

The first year I went to that Linwood School, there was four grades. They had two rooms to the school. They built a school house. It wasn't very big; it wasn't much bigger than this trailer. Then they moved an old house up there and put it on there for four grades and they had four grades in that other one. The first year I went over there, there was one person in the eighth grade and two in the seventh and three in the sixth and four in the fifth. Just like that.

The year I was in eighth grade there was another gal came there so there was three of us in the eighth grade. The biggest part of there kids were what the other teachers had, small kids. They had a pretty good bunch of them.

That dang wind blowed a lot over there. There would be a lot of days, we had to walk to school, and we would be walking in snow damned near to our knees from the drifts where it had drifted up in the road. Usually we had the tracks in the road that we could walk in.

Elaine: How far was Linwood from Manila?

Shirley: Five miles. It's under water now where Linwood was.

Elaine: Was there a lot of stores there? How big was that town?

Shirley: There wasn't a town. A guy by the name of Smith, that's where his headquarters was. There was one great big house that he lived in. There was a post office and a store. There was a few people lived up along the road. They had a big ole' dance hall there.

Elaine: Minnie Crouse was the post mistress at one time.

Shirley: There wasn't a woman that had it. Maybe it was after we moved.

Elaine: It was Charley Crouse's daughter.

Shirley: Her husband had the post office, George Rasmussen was his name. She had been married before the Rasmussen. She had a daughter Ella. George Rasmussen was in with Smith on that store and everything down there at Linwood.

Elaine: Was there a little community called Greendale.

Shirley: That was over where you go up over the mountain by the Red Canyon Lodge and all that country back this way. All that was Greendale.

Elaine: So Linwood was down farther than that.

Shirley: Oh, hell, Linwood was over on the river over the Manila way. It was clear over on the other side of the mountain. You didn't have to go over any mountain or anything. The road just went right straight from Manila down to Linwood five miles. There was a hill right where Linwood was.

Elaine: I guess I didn't understand where it was. I just pictured it up closer to the dam.

Shirley: Where the bridge goes to Green River, Wyoming, from Manila. It was just down the creek from there where Linwood was, just practically right on the creek. They had a shearing corral and ole Smith had a boarding house where his hands could eat. They charged them a quarter a day for board over there too.

This is a story I ought to tell you. When I was over in Manila, people laugh at this. I don't know how in the hell I got into it but it was when we first went over to Manila. I must have been about ten years old or so. This guy's wife was back East someplace and she was real ill and she went back there and stayed the summer. I don't know how in the heck this guy got me, but he got me through dad and mom I guess some way. He had a little herd of sheep. He probably had 175 to 200 head of sheep. He had his whole place fenced but just a little ways. About like here from Fifth South up there (quarter mile) wasn't fenced. He needed those sheep herded out of that place. He got me to come up there and be his sheepherder. What do you think he paid me?

Elaine: I don't know.

Shirley: Now, you're going to laugh.

Elaine: How much did he pay you?

Shirley: I got ten cents a day and room and board. Now, I'm not kidding you. We had Campbell soup at that time. If he would have lost his can opener we would have starved to death.

Elaine: Those ten cents might have seemed pretty good back then.

Shirley: Well that's what I got. That was my first job. Now people laugh at me but that is the God's honest truth. I got ten cents a day and my board and room.

Elaine: Everyone needs their first job.

Shirley: I wouldn't have stayed, but I knew dang well my dad would have booted my butt and sent me back if I'd went home. Anyway, I get up this one morning, I had my few clothes I had up there gathered up and we had breakfast. He corralled his sheep at night and he hadn't turned his sheep out yet. This was real early in the morning, about sunup or a little before. I had everything all packed and he said, "What are you going to do today? How come you have your clothes all packed?"

I said, "I'm going home." I was about ten or twelve miles from home, but I could've walked it.

He said, "How come are you going home?"

I said, "I've got a pony down home." And I said, "I've got a dog, and if you think I'm going to herd these sheep a foot and without a dog you're crazy." I said, "I'm through." He said, "If you'll wait until we get everything straightened around this evening we'll go get your horse." So I didn't get to go home.

That fall when his wife came, they tried to get me to stay with them and go to school. I don't know whether they'd talked to the folks or anything about that. I don't think they had.

Three or four years ago I went over there and this guy still had the same place. I think the thing with me with that, I didn't like to stay up there because I always had kids to play with and that. There wasn't any neighbor

kids very close or anything up there. I was all alone as far as kids were concerned. I think that was why I didn't like it too good.

Elaine: Did you have a ranch there? What do you remember about living there? What kind of things did you do and what was the area like?

Shirley: I liked Manila and that area when I was a kid going over there, the people, the kids and the schools and stuff were better than any place I ever lived. I really liked it.

Elaine: You probably did a lot of fishing there didn't you?

Shirley: Well not too much. Williams Fork over there in the Spring where it ran into the river, now the Williams Fork is that creek that ran down there at Linwood, where it ran into the river, it would back way up in that creek. Dad's older brother, Bill, and another brother, Charles, took George and I down there fishing. George and I was throwing rocks in the creek and playing and throwing sticks. You could see those fish. It was clear water and you could see those fish. They was what you called White Fish in the river then. They'd get big. Those swimming in there were about that long (two feet). Uncle Bill was raising hell with us kids for running up and down the bank and throwing sticks in the creek. There were two fish caught and who do think caught them? I did, both of them.

Elaine: Do you remember some of the people that lived there?

Shirley: I remember old Ern and Ein Crosby. Vernon Neilson was her son, not his, but he had some children. They were older than me and that Vernon was about my age.

I was real good friends with Dick Bennett. He was the game warden for years and years. He's the only one of those kids over there that I stayed in contact with all the years. We've seen each other quite regularly, Dick and I did.

Linwood Smith, that Mr. Smith, I don't know how many sheep he had, but he had quite a few. He came from a wealthy family back East. They did all there haying. Man, he had a lot of ground. I wasn't very old. He bought a brand new hay rake to rake hay. I wore that damned hay rake out. If I didn't hate that. It paid pretty good. He had his barn down right there at Linwood that we kept our horses in all night. We had to get down there

every morning get our team ready to go. He had a kid come out and stay with him from New York. This was a city kid. He was going to do the stacker horse. They had one horse they used on the stacker to pull the loads up you know when you put it on there with the bull rake. He did it. I don't know who in the hell harnessed his horse that morning to go out. That night we came in, and George and I weren't very old, but we could unharness a team. We took care of our teams and we got to watching him. That kid undone every buckle on that harness, every one of them, to get it off. We stood there and laughed at him. Then we got our butts chewed out for not telling him.

That old Smith over there, George worked for him some, but damn, dad usually was farming or pushed the hay crew. He put me on that damn hay rake. Ooh, I hated that.

Elaine: Was that pulled by a horse.

Shirley: Pulled by a team with two horses.

Elaine: It's probably different from machinery today. Did you have a lot of acreage that you had to work?

Shirley: They would start as quick as the alfalfa was, he had a lot of alfalfa, and as quick as the alfalfa was big enough and they wouldn't get done by the time it snowed. They would hay all summer. He had some wild hay that he did. Sometimes they wouldn't get that in before it snowed. He had one patch, a pretty good piece, that they called wild hay. It was grass.

I liked to ride a mowing machine, but I didn't like to ride that darned hay rake. I rode it too darned much. But I wore that darned hay rake about out. It was brand new. They put it together right there. I rode it a long ways.

Elaine: It sounds like you've always been a hard worker.

Shirley: When I was a kid, dad leased a bunch of that ground over there from that Smith one summer. I think he made pretty good on it. He worked the hay crew and all that. He worked for Smith all summer when he was doing it. Heck, I had to get up, but George never did have to do much of anything, but I did. I would get up and heck I'd be out there tending water, milking cows, and getting ready to go out in the field with the team and everything,

before breakfast. Dad would get me up about daylight and I'd start. I was ready to go to bed, the cows were milked and everything at night.

I thought my brother George was lazy, but he was just smarter than me. I couldn't have got away with it. We would have cows to milk and one thing or another. I would usually have mom a pretty good pile of wood chopped at night. Dad was usually, when we was there at Manila, out with the sheep in the winter time and doing something. He wasn't home. George sit there by the kitchen stove a sniffing until it was time to go to school and then he was all right. He was sick until then, until I had all the chores done. I think he was just smarter than me. I don't think he was lazy.

Hal Hatch has got some pictures of the four of us kids in mom's family in 1929. It was over there in Manila. He showed it to me and said, "That was taken out at Cocklebur wasn't it."

I told him, "That wasn't taken out at Cocklebur." I said, "I can take you and show you right exactly where it was taken. It was taken in Manila."

These people came in there with an airplane. You know that Snoopy the dog. That was the way they performed. The pilot had those great big pants. They was taking pictures there. They would do that Snoopy deal to start that plane. Contact, they started that with the propeller. That's the way they started it. He would take people up for rides. He would take the kids up and he would kind of circle and land for a quarter a piece. I think he was a come on for the parents. They had that deal for taking those pictures. They got ready to leave there and it was kind of clay. They was using an old road for the runway. They got ready to leave and they got their old plane started and everything and some how or another the clay bound up or something on one of the landing gears. It pulled it back out from under and the plane tipped over and wrecked. It tore it all to hell.

But they would take those kids up for a quarter a piece and they had that picture deal. Hell people didn't have any money. But they were there for two or three days. Then, they would do all these airplane stunts. That guy would get up there and walk on the plane and hang to the bottom, hang feet down or head down, all those tricks you know.

An airplane was pretty fun for a kid to see back then.

Elaine: Tell us any memories of your youth when you were young. Who are some of your friends in Jensen and Manila? What was town like, in Jensen and Manila?

Shirley: There was a couple stores and a post office in Jensen.

Elaine: Do you remember Bridge Day?

Shirley: The first bridge, my dad wasn't too old when that was put in, the first bridge. The next bridge I can remember when they put the second one in.

Elaine: Did they have a celebration?

Shirley: Yeah, they had a pretty big celebration. They had all kinds of stuff. They had a place or two where you could buy hotdogs. They just had a real big celebration, a big talk about the bridge. They had a parade. They came down from about the corner. Some of the kids had built little covered wagons and they had a pretty good parade.

Elaine: You were living there then?

Shirley: That's after we moved back from Manila. I would have stayed in Manila. I was fifteen and I'd worked for a guy by the name of Smith. He had a lot of sheep and a lot of ground there at Linwood. I worked for him haying for three or four summers. I went down and I even had a job. I was going to stay and I thought, well hell no, I didn't want to stay over there and the family over here, so I never did even mention it.

Elaine: That's beautiful country over there by Manila. What are some other things you did besides the farming and ranching? What did you like to play as a child?

Shirley: Everything I liked to play with was stock. I would build little ranches. I'd get willows and build the poles and corrals. That's what I'd do when I was a kid. If the kids would get around and tear them up they'd have a fight on their hands. I'd spend hours. We played a lot with stick horses. This one uncle built George and I each a little (the wheels didn't have spokes in them but they were built just exactly like a big wagon only just little tiny ones). They had the reaches and the way it guided and tongues and everything. We played with them a lot.

Elaine: Do you remember where the ferryboats were in Jensen?

Shirley: The only ferryboat I ever remember and I've been on ferryboats, but they had one over to Linwood. Down below Linwood where the Henry's Fork ran into the river, they had a ferryboat.

Elaine: I didn't know they had a ferry there.

Shirley: Yes they did, when I was a kid. They crossed sheep herds and it wasn't a very big one, but they had a ferryboat. So, I have ridden a ferryboat. Later years when they built the dam where they crossed the river below Antelope Flat right there the ferryboat they used on the east side there was a little hill and they used that for that old bridge that they had across there. That's where the ferryboat was. But they had a cable car they called it, across the river there at that ferryboat. The ferry was on one side and they tried to keep the darn cable car on the other side so you could go across and get the ferry.

Elaine: You came back here when you were fifteen. Did you go to high school here in Vernal?

Shirley: Yeah, I went some. I was one of the smart ones. I quit. My high school, I didn't go too long to high school. Anyway, it was in the spring of the year, about this time of year. Dad came out of the corral and I was saddling up a horse. I had a levi jacket and some shorts and socks and a few things in that levi jacket and tied on behind my saddle. He said, "You didn't go to school today!" I said, "No." He talked and just kept talking and finally he said, "Why didn't you go?" I said, "Well, I got a job herding sheep for old Doug Chew for \$45 a month. I can't make \$45 a month going to high school." Well he said, "You ought to go ahead and finish high school." He said, "It will be a big help to you." I said, "No, I'm not going to do it." He was still talking and I got on the horse and rode off. I was a smart young man wasn't I?

Elaine: I think it was quite common earlier on, especially for farmers and ranchers. What were some of your experiences herding sheep with Doug Chew?

Shirley: Well I herded four or five years with him. I'd had to start not too long after we came back from Manila. My wife and I was married in 1938, and I was working for Doug when we got married.

Elaine: Where did you herd the sheep for Doug?

Shirley: I herded them on Blue Mountain mostly. We wintered different places around Jensen. You're not very familiar with Jensen are you?

Elaine: I grew up in Vernal, so I know all the surrounding communities.

Shirley: Okay, the first street that runs east and west from the highway. You know down below the highway there's two or three roads that runs to it. Doug had a place down in there. I spent one winter 45 and 50 below; I slept in a sheep wagon in the bar ditch right in front of his house.

He had a house with two rooms. They had three small children. They fed me and everything in the house but hell there wasn't room for me to sleep in the house, so I slept in that sheep wagon all winter. I'd have to get up in the night and keep that fire going. You can imagine 45 to 50 below in a sheep wagon.

Elaine: That's cold!

Shirley: Yes, and how many kids would do that? I couldn't have been too old, about sixteen I imagine, seventeen.

I guess we're not supposed to tell about stealing watermelons.

Elaine: Of course you are.

Shirley: One time there was three of us. We went up that road that goes up to the cemetery.

Elaine: Was this at Jensen?

Shirley: This was at Jensen. There was two or three houses before you get where the house was. Some people by the name of Case lived there. They had a nice garden just up above the house and a watermelon patch. Anyway, three of us kids went up there. Two of us had pretty darn good horses and the other one didn't. They had a son about six or seven years older than us. When we went to ride back down past that house he stepped out there and said, "Stop, or I'll shoot." I and this other guy really beat her down the road. We got down there to where the road hits the main road you know.

We waited and waited and that other guy didn't come. We thought Eldon got old Bernard Moon. Pretty quick here he came plodding down there. I think Eldon was just trying to scare us kids. But, we each had a watermelon. He probably watched us get them. We didn't go in there and plug a bunch and tear the vines up or anything. We just went in there and each picked up a melon and walked out and got on our horses. I doubt if he even had a gun. But the two of us sure as heck got out of there.

Elaine: I bet they raised really good watermelons down there by the river.

Shirley: Everyone down there back when we were kids, raised watermelons. They raised a big patch.

We lived right across from the school there when I was a kid. My heck dad had a big ole watermelon patch and I practically raised it. It come late in the year and about when it frosted. They had an ice house. Everybody had an ice house. But, ours was filled with straw. I got dads team Saturday or Sunday, and a wagon, boy, I hauled a bunch of those melons before they frosted and put them in that ice house. Anyway, it frosted. It had frosted pretty good. Those kids from school wanted to go over on some melons. I said, "Well, you can go over at that patch and get them." Them damn frosted watermelons would give you that back door trots. They would. But anyway, about the time they got over there dad came along. You know what he did? He took them up and turned them in my melons where I had them in that ice house. But, I was going to feed them kids, I was laughing, I knew what it would do to them. I was going to feed them those frost bit ones.

There was a guy down there, Wagoner, he lived where Percy and Irma did before they would have moved there, and my hell he had a big melon, the biggest one I ever seen in my life, a really big one. He was keeping it for seed. I'll be damned, some kid, I don't know who the hell it was I don't have any idea, went down there and plugged it. That ruined it. It spoiled it so he didn't get the seeds or anything from it before it got ripe. They shouldn't have done that. You know how they used to plug them to see if they were ripe.

Elaine: Cut out a little piece.

Shirley: They shouldn't have done that. I never did know who done it. Who ever done it was damned quiet about it. He was pretty aggravated about it.

one [farmer] for fifteen dollars a month for quite awhile once, and the next job was thirty. Over on White River, I went over there for a couple of summers.

Elaine: Were you doing sheep?

Shirley: No, it was when I was a big kid, just doing farm work.

Elaine: Where did you meet your wife and what was her name?

Shirley: Her name was Margie Bernice Cook. Do you know Harold and Nelda Cook? Harold was her brother.

Now this is a different story. Jen Ainge, which was one of my cousins, Dee Curfew from Jensen, and I we always ran around together. They roller skated here in Vernal a lot. Every roller skating night we'd get together and come up here (from Jensen). They had an intermission half way through this roller skating for people to rest up I guess, one thing or another. Anyway, Dee and I were sitting there, and Jen she was one of dad's brother's girls, came down there and was sitting there. She said, "I'd sure like to skate." Dee Curfew said, "Well Jen, I'll go buy you a pair of skates." She said, "You see that girl sitting up there." I said, "Yeah!" Dee was going to get Jen's skates and she [the girl] said she would sure like to skate. We ask her about what size skates she'd take. She told us. So I go and get the pair of skates that size. She was sitting there with her legs crossed. I just skated down and sit right down in front of her and grabbed her foot and started putting that dam skate on. I didn't know that gal from Adam. And that's where I met her.

Elaine: Then you just started to date from there?

Shirley: Just started to date from there. Gaul, she just set there. I didn't know her. I'd never met her, neither had Dee. We neither one ever met her.

Elaine: Then you were married?

Shirley: We were married in July 5, 1938.

Elaine: Did you live in Jensen then?

Shirley: Well we herded sheep for quite awhile. Then we lived in Jensen. We moved around some.

Elaine: Did you have children?

Shirley: Yeah, four. Bernice is gone and two of the children. Two of the boys got killed, one in a truck accident and the other one out to the gilsonite mine.

Elaine: That's got to be hard. What are your children's names?

Shirley: Well, the oldest one, he got killed in the gilsonite mine. His name was Gerald Nile. The girl, we still have her, her names Marjorie Sheri. Then, there is a boy, Shirley Duane. He's still alive. The youngest boy got killed in a trucking accident up in Idaho. His name was Harold G.

Elaine: After the sheep herding, were you ever in the cattle business?

Shirley: I never was, well I got into the cattle business real late in my life.

Elaine: The sheep industry was big business in the early days.

Shirley: It was when I was a kid. I went from working for Doug Chew; I went one summer up with a guy by the name of Joe Livingston who had a lot of sheep out of Craig. I went up there one summer. When I came back that fall I went to the gilsonite mine.

Elaine: How long did you work there?

Shirley: Well I wasn't there very long until they put me on truck and I couldn't even drive a car. I hauled gilsonite to Craig. Honest to heck I couldn't.

Elaine: Did you always ride a horse to get around?

Shirley: Yes, well what I mean, we owned a car, but they put me on that darn truck and I hauled gilsonite better than twenty-six years from Bonanza to Craig. It wasn't always the same outfit but that's how long I did it.

I started driving truck in about 1942.

Kids, they grew up there and we lived there at Little Bonanza a long time. Dang little pups they was always goofing off. They tell this story, but we didn't know it but that youngest one was just a toddler, two or three years

old. They found a dang rattle snake pretty close to the house in a bush. They couldn't figure how in the heck they was going back to the house to get something to kill that rattle snake with, get a shovel or something so they could kill that rattle snake.

And do you know what they did?

They sit that little boy on the bush. They had him sit in the bush while they went and got shovels. They came back and the snake was gone.

Duane said he was in the bush rattling and they went to the house and found shovels and came back, three or four of them, he said some of them was just standing there watching, and they sit Harold G on that bush. Well the damn pups.

We had that old 29 truck and we parked it on a hill. It had an old magneto on it. It had no key, no nothing. When it would turn over it would start. It was hard to crank, there was no starter. They would sit it on just a little slope. Sonny Philips got all the kids on that and pushed the damn clutch in. When he let it out the old truck was running and he didn't know enough to push the clutch and stop it, so he just jumped off and run. Ole Ike Yardin, the mechanic, happened to be out of the shop and the truck was right there. He had seen what had happened and he run and stopped that damn truck and there was a mine shaft right there that it was headed for. He had a whole bunch of little kids on the back of it and he was the driver and he'd pushed that clutch in. When the truck started rolling, he let it out it started. If Ike hadn't been out there, I don't know, maybe them kids would have gone off in the mine with that truck.

When we were out there at Little Bonanza it was World War II. I had four Model A Ford cars. Everyone of them would run. The last one that I had, I really fixed it up and I traded it for a Jeep. I wish the hell I would have kept it. I gave forty dollars for one of them. A guy was going to the Army and he worked out there. He was talking and he said he had that car and he said he wanted to sell it.

I said, "How much do you want for it?"

Elaine: How many years did you live in Bonanza?

Shirley: About ten years. Anyway, he sold me that car for forty dollars. It was hard to rake up money, but I got him paid for. It took me a couple three pay days but I got him paid for. When he got ready to go the Army, he had kept

the car that was in the agreement until he got ready to go to the army. He said, "I'm not going to let you have this car. I'm going to buy it back from you."

I said, "You're going to what?"

He said, "Yeah!" Somebody else had offered him seventy five dollars for it. I said, "No you're not." I said, "You sold that car and I paid for it and it's mine." So, I got it.

His wife Vera comes in.

Shirley: This is my wife Vera. In Jensen, her first husband was one my best friends. His name was Callas Billings.

Elaine: What did you do after you quit hauling gilsonite?

Shirley: I worked for Uintah Freight. But, I hauled gilsonite. I worked about sixteen or seventeen years for hauling straight for the gilsonite companies. The rest of it was for different other companies that I hauled it for. I drove trucks a lot of years, but most of it was just around the Uinta Basin.

Elaine: Ellen said you worked for Moon Lake Electric.

Shirley: Yes, but that's in later years. I was fifty six years old when I started there. I was there about twenty three years though. I worked at their power plants. Whiterocks was always a Branch, it wasn't a ward. The LDS did have a Branch there. They got a pretty nice chapel. I was in that Branch Presidency for about fourteen years.

When I was over there working in that Branch, we tried to have a party once a month. There was one event, one guy barbequed chicken, man you talk about barbeque chicken. He would sure make it good. And, another guy who raised sheep would get great big lamb and barbeque it. He'd stuff that lamb with dressing. You put it down in the ground and cover it up and talk about good. That's the way he barbequed it, he built a fire and put that lamb down in the ground. I don't know how dang much dressing it'd take to stuff that, but he'd stuff it just like you would a turkey. You talk about good.

Elaine: Where did you live when you were over there?

Shirley: I lived at the power plant. There was two houses and we lived in one of them. It was up in Uinta Canyon, about ten miles north of Neola right on the river. We were there about twenty-three years. That's where I accumulated my cows.

Elaine: Did you have a big herd?

Shirley: Oh, I had about 150, not too big of herd. I built them up from nothing. Our son-in-law would go to California and bring back those calves. He would let me pick out the ones I wanted. That's how I got started in my cows.

Elaine: So then they would have calves and it just grew?

Shirley: It just grew bigger and bigger and bigger. I bought a few, but not very many.

Elaine: They used to have the sales barn.

Shirley: They still have the sales barn. It's in Roosevelt now. It used to be up here on the hill.

Elaine: Did you do that a lot?

Shirley: No. When I had my cattle it was over at Roosevelt. They quit this one up here on the hill. I never did sale too many of my cattle through the sale.

Blaine Morrell was the bishop in Neola when we went over there. We'd been there a while and they had a special interest group. It was for the widows and bachelors. They had a few in Neola. They couldn't get them doing anything. Bishop Morrell said, "I got a couple I'm going to put in there." The Stake raised heck, because they said you have to put someone in there that's in there group to do this. They said it wouldn't work.

They put my wife and I over this special interest in our ward. We got acquainted with those widows, and a guy, two or three or four. We didn't do nothing. We let those people do it themselves but we'd just take them and make suggestions and things. They started having a family home evening. That was when it first came out. Honest to hell, Bernice and I didn't do it. We would help make phone calls or anything they needed any

help with. They did it their selves. They had people that would come from all over the state to those family home evenings.

I guess the Bishop went to the Stake President and said, “You see how its working now.”

But Bernice and I didn’t do a heck of a lot. Most of them couldn’t drive or anything or didn’t have cars. The ones that had cars would furnish them and we both drove, so we’d take two car loads. We worked over there, for the senior citizens. We drove their buses, both of us. Like they have over here, where they have the dinner and stuff. We hauled them all over. They had two vans. She’d drive one and I’d drive the other one. They finally got a bus that would haul about twenty. They wouldn’t let anybody but me drive it.

Elaine: How long did you do that?

Shirley: We did that for ten years I guess. There was a guy over there that had a bus, a little van, and I believe he hauled eleven people in it. He run that two or three days a week to the Provo Temple. We always took that at least once a week.

We left Roosevelt over there with that little old van, that van load, real early in the morning. We left awfully early in the morning. It was only 36 below. We got back and none of the cars would start that had been parked. We had a hell of a time getting home. We finally got the car that Bernice and I had we finally got it to run. We took everybody home. It was cold that night.

Elaine: We often have cold winters here in this area don’t we?

Shirley: Vera can tell you about that winter when I slept in that sheep wagon, because they lived just down below us in a house down there on the lake.

Vera: Yeah, and it was cold.

Shirley: It was forty to fifty below. Was it very foggy that winter?

Vera: Yes, and I had to walk to school. And, I danged near froze to death but nobody seemed to care and that made me mad so I come out of it pretty easy. You get mad, you can do anything.

Elaine: How long did it stay that cold?

Shirley: It didn't break too early in the spring. That winter we didn't have any snow until between Christmas and New Years and the biggest part of it came. We had a herd of sheep up the river from Jensen, Doug had them. We was coming down on the south side of the river and that was right after New Years and that snow was above my knees. From the first canyon up there we crossed and about right there they [the sheep] stayed on the road. But that snow was above my knees.

Elaine: Did you have a ranch?

Shirley: No, I had some ground, but not very much. I could lease ground around there, hay ground and everything cheaper than I could pay taxes and all that stuff on a ranch, especially if I had to pay interest on money or anything.

Elaine: You've lived several places in the Uinta Basin.

Shirley: We lived in Craig for awhile. I worked out of there driving truck. Okay, let's get back to the McKee story.

Elaine: I know some from Tridell.

Shirley: Those in Tridell go back to Thomas McKee. Thomas McKee is my great grandfather. So, they're pretty well connected. There was four of those boys. Two of them came out here to the Uinta Basin with their dad. I guess they were regular hellions. They said the old man was worse than the boys. That's where McKee Draw got its name, was from them. Two of them stayed here in the Uinta Basin. The other two went back. My great grandfather was one of them that went back to Spanish Fork or where ever they were from. My great grandmother was a Swett, these that was over here at Greendale. I think there was six children and the parents left back from Nauvoo or where ever they started from you know. During the journey, the parents both died and these two, a boy and a girl, out of the family that made it into Salt Lake Valley. One of them was my great grandmother.
The Swett up here would have to have been the boy.

Elaine: I think his name was Orson.

Shirley: Yeah, but they came from the boy. Mine came from the girl.

Elaine: Then, your great grandmother married the McKee?

Shirley: My great grandmother was this Swett girl, would have been these Swetts up here. One of those Swetts was a scribe for Joseph Smith at one time. Those McKee's from Tridell came from the same line that I did. There was a George and a Harvey that stayed here. My grandmother when I was small, they used to bring her up here to visit the McKee's. Harvey McKee was one of them. They were our cousins.

Elaine: I know there is a McKee family reunion every summer and I know several people that are tied into the McKee's and go to it. I guess there is hundreds of people that go to this reunion. It must be a pretty big family.

Shirley: The Martin Handcart deal you know, that got snowed up at Handcart Cove. My Grandfather Ainge was there. His name is on that Independent Rock where you cross the Laramie River going toward Casper. He was sixteen years old and he was one of the ones when they came and could only take so many of them back. He was left behind. He did make it. His name is on that plaque they have up there. But, he was sixteen years old. He left Great Brittan to come to the United States. How do you think he done it?

Elaine: On a ship I suppose.

Shirley: A stowaway, that's what he did. He wanted to go with the Mormons and I guess he didn't have any money or much of anything. He was just a kid and alone. This family took him in and said if he would help them and that, that they would pay his way across. That's how he got into Salt Lake, was a stowaway. He did spend the winter there at Martins Cove. He was one of the ones that survived. He was sixteen years old and he survived.

Elaine: Do you remember any family traditions or special holidays?

Shirley: Grandma's family they had to come by team and wagon. She lived up there on Brush Creek. They would come up there ever once in awhile and spend all day. They'd go fishing and have a big fish fry. We used to do a lot of that.

Shirley: I was working for HatchCO when that second boy of ours got killed. They used to haul the phosphate out of here. We used to change trucks down there at that eatery place (on Vernal Ave). Anyway, when that second boy got killed I was out on the truck when I got word from it. They'd been trying to find me, and I don't know why they didn't get the patrol out, but nobody ever stopped me. We went out and loaded our trucks and called from up there while we was loading and the guy that was going to take the truck out next could meet us down there (at the changing place). But anyway, I went to go past there going up and usually you wasn't going very fast about there and then you start to pick up speed. Anyway, there was a guy there just going out or something, and he came out waving his arms and hollering. I slowed up and he hollered to me and said, "One of your boys was killed in a trucking accident up in Idaho." So I knew which one it was.

Do you know what I did? I didn't even shut that damn truck off, I just jumped out of it and broke and run from the pickup to get home to my wife.

It happened that her nephew was coming down; he was going to go load the truck for me, meet me there. That was there idea. He ran and got in the truck and stopped it before it done anything. But it was still in gear and a going. But, I couldn't think of nothing but to get home to her. I knew she would have known.

Orville Dudley and I and her husband (Vera's) Callis Billings were all good friends growing up. We was real good friends. Her husband got hurt real bad. Vera what did he do have his back broke with the horse?

Vera: I don't think he broke his back. He broke a couple legs or something.

Shirley: Anyway, he was down in bed and couldn't get up and get around. Orville's family and Vera's family and our family, Orville had an old International flatbed ton pickup. It had a flatbed on it. We decided we'd go on a picnic up on the mountain. Callas couldn't get up and around. We tied ole Callis on this cot and lifted him up on the back of that truck and fastened that bed down solid on the truck bed. We went to the mountain. That was when there wasn't much of a road up there. We went down Little Brush Creek where we had the picnic. We were there all day. Orville and I got him down off the truck when we got up and the kids played with him. Man, he had a

ball. He had more fun than any of us. How he stood it going up over that old rough road in that rough truck.

We had children, Duane was a baby and Vera and Callis had babies. I don't even think neither one of them was walking.

Elaine: You have two living children. How many grandchildren do you have?

Shirley: Sheri's got five and Duane has got three. That's my grandchildren. Vera has a whole damn herd don't you Vera?

Vera: I have no clue how many I got Shirley. I gave that up a long time ago.

Shirley: She has a pretty good size posterity.

Elaine: Your sons that were killed didn't have children?

Shirley: One of them did. I didn't count those two. That would make ten. You know Glendon Simper, his wife Jen. When my boy got killed she married Glendon later on. They had a boy and a girl. That would make ten.

Elaine: What are some of your fondest memories?

Shirley: When we was over there at Manila when you're going down into Sheep Creek, down the switchbacks, right straight across there's that red hill. A long that red hill someplace there's a trail that comes from the top all the way down through those ledges into the bottom. Us kids over there at Manila when we lived there every kid had a horse. There would be fifteen or twenty of us. Every Easter that's where we'd go Easterin', we'd go over and go down that trail down on Sheep Creek and play along the river. That was a fun time always. There'd be all of the girls and the boys and everybody. Hell, a heck of a bunch of them.

Elaine: You probably went everywhere by horse.

Shirley: The best horse I ever owned was that I had since I've been here. You know I have macular degeneration, I don't see very well. I got where I couldn't see that horse. You can't ride a horse if you can't see him. I never could. He jumped shy of things. One time he would have throwed me off and hurt me, so I got rid of him.

Elaine: That's probably quite a struggle for you to not be able to see the way you used to.

Shirley: You know, a person should be awful thankful, because I can see good enough to get around. I've went to these clinics and things where people all their lives couldn't tell night from day. There was one gal that came here from Salt Lake, and she could thread a needle. She could be in this room a little while and you'd think that she could see, the way she could get around. She did her own housekeeping and had a family. The only thing that made her mad, once in awhile they'd put the TV turner where she didn't keep it and she couldn't find it.

Elaine: I guess we learn to adapt to our situations.

Shirley: I wish to heck I would have taken typing in high school and I didn't. I wish I had had. It would have helped me. These people who have been blind a long time; they take one of these phones and they can dial it. They have one of the papers in Salt Lake that they can dial on and get the morning news and football scores.

Some things I see a heck of a lot better than I do other things and some days I see a lot better. But, it could be worse; I could be totally blind so I couldn't get around or anything.

I knew Ellen's husband quite well over there around Moon Lake. He and I got to be pretty good friends. I liked him real well. He was better hands that they had over there.

This is something that I've laughed about. My wife had cancer. She moved over from the plant a year or something before I did. She was living out there and the missionaries, there was three of them, and came there to the house, the stake missionaries. They were giving her all this stuff and wanting to come see her, one thing or another.

"Well what about her husband, would he be interested."

She told them, "Yeah, he's president of the Whiterocks Branch, so I think he'd kind of be interested." She said, "My gad, you could have knocked those guys over."

There's one instance that stands out really in my life with her. She had this darn cancer. She had it real bad. Her darn liver, you couldn't have put your

finger down between-----? They gave her chemo and all this stuff you know. They pretty well cleared that up and she didn't go very bad for about five years. When it came back, the Bishop, four or five Priesthood holders, and friends, were there at the house. The Bishop happened to be there this evening. She wanted a blessing. She was blessed that she wouldn't be in pain, wouldn't feel much pain. I know that woman never did.

It got in her bones and she broke some ribs, about two or three weeks before she passed away. They would go to turn her over and that's the only time I ever heard her act like she was having pain. I slept with her every night and if she would have been having pain she would have moaned or groaned in the night. That's the way the Lord works.

Elaine: That would have been one of the larger trials you had in your life.

Shirley: Vera lost her husband the same dang way.

Elaine: Cancer is such bad news.

Shirley: It's not very good to go through. I would have given anything to not have lost her, you know what I mean. But, I'd rather of lost her than her to be living the way she was living. For about three or four days before she passed away, she was in a coma. Dr. Madsen was her doctor. He asked her what she wants. She said, "Well, I just want to stay home." He said, "Well, if you can get somebody help you and stay with you." Gaylyn was his nurse up there. She came out about every two or three days and she was real good and helpful. I had one of my sisters and two sister-in-laws. Nelda, she stayed. There was always two of them there with her. So, she didn't have to go anyplace she didn't want to be.

I always wondered how in the heck a person would handle something, to wake up and be laying there by somebody that had passed away. But, I went to bed, and she was breathing. I reached over and kissed her and lay down and pretty quick I rose up and she wasn't breathing. So, I guess you do about anything if you have to.

Elaine: So you've learned you can handle tough things.

Shirley: The thing with me, if I had my eyes, I'd be in darn good shape. My memory is awful good.

I wasn't a bronco rider or anything but my daughter's husband, but they're not married anymore, anyway a couple years ago we were up to Josie Morris'. They was talking. He said, "Yeah, Shirley always had a horse that nobody else could ride." Hell, I never thought of it. Most of my horses were that way. The last one that I had that was real bucky, Keith Redding and Bernice, they told me, "That old horse is going to buck you off." I said, "Nah!" They said, "He'll catch you when you're not looking." I said, "I'll watch him."

He was real bucky, but he was the easiest horse in the world to hold up. You could just touch those reins and he would quit bucking and he might jump around a little but he would keep his head up.

I finally sold him, and that was the hardest thing I ever done was sell that horse. I know what would have happened. He would have bucked me off one day.

He was advertised on the radio over there at Roosevelt. My wife told me and I was wanting a horse. "Well let's go look at him." We go down and this lady had him caught and she had a halter on him. That damn halter was right up under his eyes. She put a saddle on him and never put a bridle or nothing, just fixed some reins on that old halter. The first thing he did was stick his head in the dirt.

She said, "I guess you don't want him." I said, "Well, I don't know but the price you want for him, I think I'll take him." Her husband was there and he said, "You can't have the horse unless you take this old mare. He gave me an old mare to go with the horse. But that horse was out of real good stock, but he was sure bucky.

There's something I enjoy and we all enjoy very much. Have you heard about this wrinkle club that the Burger King has? It's something else, isn't it Vera, going up there to Burger King on Saturday morning. It cost us about three or four dollars to go up there and have breakfast for the two of us. Lyle Harlow plays and he doesn't charge anything for it. He plays and sings all those good old western tunes. It's a bunch of guys, that most of them I've known all our lives.

Elaine: Do they tell stories?

Shirley: You know George Long.

Elaine: He's a good story teller.

Shirley: He's one of the best in the country. I wish I could tell a story like he does. George wants to get a story on those canals that all run into Jensen out of the Brush Creek. I can show him where they were and tell him quite a bit about them. He wants me to go down with him. I wish I knew some more about where everything is now. They've got those pipelines they don't follow where the canals were at all.

Yeah, that club up here; I really enjoy that. I think everyone does. Everyone sits around and talks. There's one guy, Ted Wilkins, I've known him years and years. One morning up there, he can't hear very good. He shook my hand, "How are you Shirley."

"I'm doing fine."

He said, "What did you say?"

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "Well, I can see you but I can't hear you."

I said, "Well Ted, I can hear you but I can't see you."

I can tell who you guys are because I've been sitting here looking at you. But on an average, I can't look at a persons face and tell you who they are if they don't speak up or walk or something. But, if they will speak up, most of them, I know their voice.

Elaine: So, that's probably one of the most enjoyable things you do is go to the Wrinkle Club and enjoy the company of those people.

Shirley: Sometimes there's fifteen, twenty people. There's usually a pretty good bunch. He sings all those old time songs. A lot of times George Long will have stories thought up and tell it about the Uinta Basin. Bernice and I both square danced at one time on our horses. They had a group here that they had enough for two sets of horses.

Elaine: I've never heard of square dancing on horses.

Shirley: We square danced on our horses. It was a lot of fun. The group, it was people we knew real well. We had a ball.

Bernice had a real good horse. Bernice was a natural cowgirl. Boy she knew stock and she knew how to handle them. She didn't grow up with them. But she could judge cattle a lot better than I could and I grew up

with them. She knew how to handle them. She was just natural. We did that for a lot of years. We went up with Howard Ainge up on Wild Mountain, up to his camp every week-end.

When we had our horses and were able we would go up here on the forest trails, the old forest trails that are blazed. I used to like to ride them. Hell, she'd go with me. We'd spend all day riding those trails. In later years one time she told me, "Shirley, I hated that." I said, "Then, why did you do it?" She said, "You liked it, and I wasn't going to stop you from doing it." I thought she liked it all the time.

I spent a heck of a lot of time with these Cattoor's running wild horses. Dave Cattoor is worth a lot of money now. He's done it through these wild horse gathers. He's worth a lot. But, you ought to have seen him the first time I seen him. We were living in Craig at the time. Dave's about the same age as our daughter. He was a little snotty nosed raggedy kid. This boy of ours come dragging him home one night. My wife took him right under her wing. He told our son, he said, "Gosh, I sure hate to go home. All my folks do is quarrel and fight." So this boy of ours said, "Why don't you come and go home with me." And so he did. He lived with us a good deal of his life after that. The little pup would come stay and all at once he'd be gone for four or five days, maybe a month. Then he'd come back. He's told me, "I don't why in the hell I just didn't come there and stay with you." But, I sure laugh the first time I saw him, and then now.

Elaine: He gathers wild horses?

Shirley: Yeah, he has a helicopter. He's got a lot of them.

Elaine: What did you do to help him?

Shirley: I would help with whatever had to be done. I was getting old enough that I couldn't rope much or anything. I have roped a few wild horses and things. That's when I was young and didn't have any better sense.

He and his wife now, I don't know how much they got, but they made a lot of money doing those horses.

He'd been watching these movies I guess of holdups and things. He was in California and he bought him a gun. He came up here. Our oldest boy was up on the mountain for Howard Ainge that had cattle. He went up there

with him. You know what he bought that gun for. He was going to become an outlaw and do some holdups. He had his mind made up, that's what he bought that gun for and was practicing with it. That boy of ours I guess talked him out of it. Yeah, he was going to become and outlaw.

Elaine: We've had our share of outlaws here in the Basin in the early days.

Shirley: Well, I'm not telling you about the McKee's.

Elaine: Were some of them outlaws?

Shirley: They didn't do a hell of a lot.

Elaine: I think we have a book on the McKee brothers.

Shirley: I know they spent some time in jail. There was the four of them and the dad. They said that the boys were pretty rough guys, but they said the dad was worse than they were. That's where McKee Draw got its name.

My grandmother had a great big high chest of drawer, a great big high thing. The biggest piece of furniture you ever saw. She always said one of her relatives that was in jail made that piece of furniture. I bet you anything you want to bet, it was her dad.

Elaine: Her dad was one of the McKee's.

Shirley: One of those McKee's. There was four of them and two of them stayed here and two, my grandfather and another one went back out there when they got out of jail. (It would have been) my great grandfather.

Grandma Ainge had an awful temper. Somebody was throwing one of those fits like kids do. Someone said, "You better quit throwing that damn Ainge fit." My dad gave him to understand, "That's not an Ainge fit, that's a McKee fit. The Ainge's didn't throw fits like that."

This is something I've heard all my life. The Black Hawk War that was an Indian deal wasn't it. Well, he (grandfather) was in that. All the families, they had an uprising and all the families they tried to get them to move into the fort. And, grandpa was gone fighting the Indians or something. Anyway, grandma wouldn't go. She said, "To hell with it." She wasn't going to leave her house. A bunch of those Indians came to the house and tried

to break in. I think they had a cellar down in the bottom of the house. She put the kids down there I understand. One of these Indians broke the door in or something. He got his head in the door. Grandma got him fastened in there someway and got a fire shovel and beat him over the head. She killed him. They claim she beat him over the head until she done him in. But, she didn't want to go to the fort; she didn't want to leave her home.

That road up Brush Creek was just a swamp where it is now, where you go down towards the Dinosaur Monument, and you turn and go up Brush Creek. Grant, and George Gross, Bernice's brother, borrowed that car from her. They were going up to Evans. They went up that way. Well, they told us that, that car won't move. They said, "We can't even spin the wheels." I came home, I'd been working some place, maybe the Gilsonite, and Bernice told me (about it). I go up there, and the clutch wasn't tore out of it. It was slipping pretty good. They had tore every gear out of that but high gear. They jammed it; they got stuck in the mud. Grant had been working for somebody up to Craig, and he had some money coming so they took off and went up there to get his money. But, Martin Evans had one that the motor was out of it and he just had all that stuff redone. He took a horse and went down and pulled that old Model A up to his place. I changed all that out, and had me a car.

When I was working for Uintah Freight, sometimes we would get more than I could do. I would go out there and stay nights. I had a sleeper on the truck, just work the whole week. Sometimes for the week-end they'd have to send somebody out to help, I'd get too tired you know. Now that ain't very far from Bonanza to Craig, but we could ride sleeper and save about an hour and a half, two hours, per trip so we could finish up earlier on the week-end. We would do that instead of one of us making the trip and then calling the other one to come out there. It would take about two hours longer to do the trip if we done it that way.

But, anyway, this was in the winter time. This guy came out. We had a key to the Conoco Station there in Dinosaur that we could fuel anytime the day or the night. He didn't stop and fuel. Between the fuel tanks there was a line. We got just darn near to Maybell and the old truck quick. It ran out of fuel, that line between the two tanks had jelled off and we didn't have no truck. And, do you know how cold it was? It was only 62 below.

I picked up a sack of sawdust or something laying there by the tracks, I had thrown it in behind the sleeper. We had that and we finally got a dang

fire started and you could put your body like this, and you'd burn this side and this side would freeze. But we wasn't there very long until a truck came along. He stopped. We got in with him until his truck damn near stopped. It was just coming daylight when he finally took off. He had to or his dang truck would have quit him. We weren't either one dressed very darned good. We decided we would walk on into Maybell. We could stay there. We just got started and I said, "I'm going back and put my coveralls on." I just turned around and started back and here come a darn car, two or three boys in it. They gave us a ride into Maybell. So, I didn't freeze to death and it was 62 below.

Honest to heck you could put your hands down by that little fire I had going and they would be warm, but the back of your hands would be getting colder. But, that's all it was that night was 62 below. But I had a heck of a time getting that truck started.

I hauled propane one time for quite awhile. This old truck was a cab-over. They sent a guy out with me, Cloyd Hughes. Boy you don't drive a cab-over like you do a regular truck. I kept telling him, "You're crowding that shoulder too close with that truck." I said, "You got to get over." I kept telling him and telling him. Finally, I guess he got tired of it. He gave me to understand he was a better truck driver than I was. I shut up. We got up and got loaded and started out of that plant. We were dragging a pup, was what we were doing. I'll be damn, he got over too close and put that pup over in the bar ditch and rolled it over.

We had that old gas engine. It looked like Salt Lake City lit up when you raised the hood at nights, with sparks jumping. Anyways, that's the worst thing you can do. The fumes were really coming up around it. I just took my clothes off and almost put my billfold in my boots. I grabbed my pants and my boots and barefooted, and it was cactusy too, and I ran out through the brush there for a ways to get away because I figured that damn truck would be blowing up. But anyway it didn't. I tried to get him. You could see a pretty good stream of vapor coming out of it. That propane when it hits the air it turns to vapor. I told him what he could do to stop it, but do you think I could get that guy. He'd turned the engine off, is the worst thing you could do. Do you think I could get him to do it? No! Well I had to put my boots and pants on and walked back there and did it. We caught a ride into Riverton. That's where we were out of is Riverton, Wyoming.

Elaine: Who were you working for?

Shirley: Jack Kier. I worked for that refinery when it was at Jensen and I worked for them when they were over at Rangely. There was a guy who was a cousin to Vera, Frank Kendal. He was just a little younger than me. There was two of us back then at American Asphalt, that was Little Bonanza. They had four trucks, but they were single axles and two of us, just the two drivers would go and we could unload just those two. We got up to Elk Springs and stopped for a coffee and went in. My truck broke down or something; I had one of the old mud truck. They was working on the one I usually drove and I had one of the older trucks. The dang thing something happened to it, so we had to have the mechanic come up. When we came back from Craig, it was too dang late to take that truck up and unload it so we got out and I checked the tire and I had a flat tire on that old truck I was on. They always had two or three spares down there around the shop. Harold Cook was out there, he and Nelda. He was going with us. We were eating breakfast, and old Frank, we was going to get one of those tires. We wanted to do it that night, "Oh, we'll do it in the morning." Put one of those spares up on top of the load, you know. "No, we'll do it in the morning." I'll be damned if he didn't get in a hurry, and he came up there to the house and ate breakfast with us and didn't put that spare on.

"Well, let's go get it."

"Oh, hell, let's use your spare."

Back then the valve caps all had a deal that you could let the valve stem out with. But anyways, we get the spare down. It was back up under the truck. We get it down and it didn't have a valve cap and the valve was all mudded up and it wouldn't hold air. I said, "Well I'll go over here to the truck and get a valve cap and come back and take out and clean it out." He got tinkering around with a match while I was getting this valve cap and he said, "Hell, I've got it all cleaned out and it's working." I said, "Well, old Harold and I will take that tire off while you're pumping that one up." It was down quite a bit, real low, too damned low to put the spare on. Harold and I took the tire off and took the inside off and put the one that was on the outside on the inside so when they got that one pumped up I said to him, "Frank, how much air you got in it?" I think we put eighty-five pounds in them. He told me. I said, "Hell that's good enough. Come on, I'll just take it and then I'll check it if I have to drive this truck tomorrow. He said, "No, I'll either put eighty-five pounds in it or blow the damned thing up. About that time the rim came off and hit him to the side of the head and killed him. He didn't die for eleven hours. They wouldn't let us bring him to Vernal from Elks Springs. He had to go to Haden, Colorado, was

the first hospital they could get him to. His head was really crushed. He had one of those truck drivers hats we used to call them, and it cut it clear across here.

But, I started to pump that damn tire up. He said, “No, I’ll....” That was when that little school teacher went walking up over the hill and her dress blew up over her head. He was laughing about that when he was hit.

He wasn’t quite as heavy a guy as I was, this guy wasn’t. He had a brother, Harold; he was a great big guy. The Stanton’s was hauling gilsonite out of Bonanza. One of these guys that worked for Stanton, one of there dock hands up there, I went to go around the back of my truck to do the binders about a week later after that had happened. I met this guy just face to face, just about like you are there. My god, his eyes got big, and he started back, and he said, “My god, man I thought you got killed.”

Well, I was bigger than that other guy and they knew that it was this big guy’s brother. And they all knew him from working there at Stanton and they thought I was his brother.

I said, “My god if I’m dead, I guess there’s a bunch of us dead.”

I’ll never forget, he was one of these holy rollers or some kind of a church. Man his eyes were big and he just started backing up and gasping.

Elaine: He thought he was seeing a ghost.

Shirley: He thought he was seeing a ghost.
One time there was a gal started walking around behind the truck real close. We was parked and just coming out of the coffee shop. She got down behind the truck and when she got up there and I said, “Boo!” And she said, “Boo, yourself.” Well, it wasn’t a girl, it was a midget. No kidding. I thought it was some little gal coming behind there. She wasn’t as tall as the back of the truck.

Elaine: What have you learned from your life’s experiences?

Shirley: You know a person could go on and on with these darn experiences.

Elaine: You’ve had quite a variety of jobs and you’re well rounded from the variety of experiences you’ve had.

Shirley: I was coming from Craig one night. Bernice and I were going square dancing. I was late. Boy, that old truck I was driving was a semi-cab over, an International. I was coming down this hill the other side of Elk Springs. A car up on the other side was flashing its lights. And boy the old truck had run pretty good and I was in a hurry because if I hurried we could still make the square dance. But any way, this darn car was flashing its lights. I slowed down quite a bit. The darn road came down and then it turned. This was a pretty big field off in here. There was quite a bit of snow there. This car kept flashing its lights up on the other side. I couldn't imagine what the hell. But I thought, "Well, maybe I better slow down." So, I slowed down quite a little bit. I got down to that curve and what do you think was there?
A big old Hereford bull laying cross ways to the road.

Elaine: A car hit it?

Shirley: A bus had and broke its leg. Now this was told to me afterwards. "The bus driver tried to drive him off the road and the bull put him back in the bus. So he went off and left him. Jim Johnson, and he'd been a truck driver, was the highway patrolman.

Anyway I hit that bull. I knew this was it. When I seen him I thought there's no damn way in the world when I hit that bull it will take the front end out from under it. I could have dodged him, but I would have hit him, and I would have tipped the truck over. I didn't dare do that. That was my thoughts. But I just hit him square on and that old truck went up in the air and when it was coming down it looked like my face was going to hit the pavement. Anyway, the trailer didn't feel right. When it hit I could tell I could handle the front end. It didn't take the front end out from under it. I could tell I could handle that. But it didn't feel right so I really stepped on the accelerator. This car came down and my god there was a woman screaming; you could have heard her to Vernal. "Are you hurt, are you hurt, are you hurt. " She said, "That trailer was lying on its side." I said, "No, I'm not hurt."

She said, "My gad, how did you do it?" It was a woman hollering and a man trying to shut her up. But anyway she was really excited. About that time I started to get my flares and stuff out so nobody else would do it. I knew the bull would be dead.

Jim, the highway patrolman, he drove truck a lot. I knew him when he was driving trucks. We were friends.

We went around there and looked the truck over good. I pulled it up and backed it up and this and that. Jim said, "I believe you can drive it home." I said, "Yeah, I'll get this bull drug off the road." He had the highway department come up to drag that bull off the road. They were there. They said, "We'll get this bull off the road and I'll be down there in a few minutes."

I hadn't had anything to eat since morning or noon. I stopped in Elk Springs and had a sandwich and a cup of coffee. That damned pup, and I've known him. They had some stools and I was sitting up to the counter and he come and set on that and he smoked a pipe. He never even got a cup of coffee. He just set there smoking that pipe and looking. I said, "That dirty son of a gun is trying to figure out a way to give me a ticket." I got up and paid for my stuff and walked out. He said, "Get in the car!" I said, "What?" And he said, "Get in this car, we're going back over there."

You know what had happened? Now, this is impossible. The inside trailer tires were out in the gravel, now that's the inside ones of the road. The other ones had been out in the air of that trailer. I'd pulled it back up straight. Now, that's no kidding. If that would have tipped over it would have tipped the truck over and probably I would have got killed.

He asked me, "How in the hell did you do that?" I said, "I'm just a better truck driver than you are." But, if I'd slacked off I know damned well. But that woman said that trailer was laying on its side. I out run it and pulled it back up on its feet. That's the only time I got a bit excited. A lot of people would have had after effects, but I never did. But, I got home and I called the guy that owned Uintah Freight. I called him and told him what had happened. I said, "Just tell Bernice I'm going to be late."

She said, "He called, and he breathed in that phone for thirty minutes before he said a word." Pretty quick he told her. He said, "Shirley's had an accident." All he'd had to done was told her I'd be late because everything was fine. My gosh, she was really upset by the time I got home. That's the only time I ever went to pieces and I went to pieces. It was after I got home. I don't think if she hadn't of been hysterical that I'd been that way. But, she didn't know whether I was hurt or what the hell with him doing that.

Elaine: Shirley, it was nice visiting with you.
Shirley: I enjoyed it too.